

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : A. Rosen
FROM : G. R. Scatterday

DATE: December 19, 1963

SUBJECT: EDWARD PENNEY WILLENS
DEPARTMENTAL ATTORNEY
CRIMINAL DIVISION

Tolson
DeLoach
Mohr
Bishop
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
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Rosen
Sullivan
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Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

In a memorandum dated December 18, 1963, from Mr. Evans to Mr. Belmont, entitled "Lee Harvey Oswald, Internal Security - R," it was indicated that Edward Willens of the Criminal Division of the Department was to be designated as the Department's representative to the Presidential Commission's inquiry into the assassination of former President Kennedy. The Director has asked for information concerning Willens.

Willens was the subject of a Departmental Applicant Investigation in 1955 for the position of Law Clerk in the Anti-Trust Division. He was investigated again during 1961, when he was being considered for the position of Attorney, Criminal Division. These investigations did not reveal any derogatory information concerning him; however, certain derogatory information was developed concerning his father, Joseph Robert Willens.

Edward Penney Willens was born May 27, 1931, in Chicago, Illinois. He attended both Stanford University, Palo Alto, California, and the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, receiving his A. B. degree in 1953. He attended Yale Law School, New Haven, Connecticut, receiving his LL.B degree in 1956.

During the investigation of Edward Penney Willens, all individuals contacted reported favorably as to Willens's character, loyalty, and associates. The 1961 investigation developed information that he had attended the Vienna Youth Festival in 1959. The Vienna Youth Festival, in 1959, was supported by the World Federation of Democratic Youth, cited as a communist organization in the House Committee on Un-American Activities Guide to Subversive Organizations and Publications, January 2, 1957. Prior to going abroad, Willens advised the State Department and the Bureau of his intentions to attend the Festival and stated his purpose was to minimize propaganda and defend the policies of the United States.

Additionally, the 1961 investigation of Willens resulted in information being received that Joseph Robert Willens and his wife, Helen, were granted visas to travel in Hungary, prior to January 28, 1961. In 1956, information was received by the

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From Mr. Scatterday to Mr. Rosen

Chicago Division that the name of J. R. Willens appeared on the mailing list of the Chicago Council of American-Soviet Friendship, an affiliate of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, which has been designated pursuant to Executive Order 10450. It was also developed during the 1961 investigation that Joseph Robert Willens had, since 1958, resided next door to Tony Accardo, prominent Chicago hoodlum.

Joseph Robert Willens was interviewed by Bureau Agents on May 19, 1961, and advised that he had visited Russia in 1956 with five other individuals from Chicago, who were interested in home building and construction. He also advised that he has visited Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania on sight-seeing tours, as well as to see types of construction utilized in home building. He stated that he is opposed to communism and the types of government existing behind the iron curtain. He denied any affiliation with the Chicago Council of American-Soviet Friendship, and stated most emphatically that he has never been a member or in any way associated with the Chicago Council of American-Soviet Friendship or any similar organization.

Joseph Robert Willens admitted that Tony Accardo's residence is immediately south of his home in River Forest, Illinois, and that they had been neighbors since 1953. He stated that he does not associate with Accardo, or any of his friends. He also advised that he and his family are law-abiding citizens and believe themselves to be good Americans, and he hopes that the proximity of his residence with that of Accardo would not cause anyone to believe that he approves of Accardo or any of his associates.

ACTION:

None-for information.

GRM *W.D.* *[Signature]* *KRC*